

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A method comprising:

receiving at a user device an indicator signal from an interactive television service provider's network, the indicator signal indicating availability of alternate content and containing data representing an indicator ~~hot-key~~ form;

determining, at the user device and independent of any request by a user of the user device for the alternate content, whether the indicator signal is relevant to ~~the~~a user viewing original content provided by the interactive television service provider's network; and

responsive to determining the indicator signal is relevant to the user, displaying on a screen of the user device an indication that the indicator signal has been received, the indication corresponding to the data representing the indicator form,

wherein subject matter of the alternate content is different from subject matter of the original content; and

wherein the determining is based at least in part on one of the following: ~~a channel providing the original content presently being viewed by the user; choice of a content type selected by the user in viewing the original content; and a genre of the original content~~ selected by the user.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the data representing the indicator form indicates one of a plurality of possible indicator forms.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the data representing the indicator form comprises a graphic.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the graphic is displayed on the screen as the indication that the indicator signal has been received.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein the graphic is pre-selected by the user.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the graphic is included in the indicator signal.

20 - 44. (canceled)

45. (currently amended) A user device for use in receiving content from an interactive television provider's network~~system~~ comprising:

a tuner, receiver, and demodulator portion and a demultiplexor portion to receive an indicator signal from an interactive television service provider's network, the indicator signal indicating availability and a location of alternate content and containing data representing an indicator form; and

a processor coupled to the demultiplexor portion to determine whether the indicator signal is relevant to a user viewing original content over a channel provided by the interactive television service provider's network, and responsive to determining the indicator signal is relevant to the user, displaying on a screen of the user device an indication that the indicator signal has been received, the indication corresponding to the data representing the indicator form;

wherein the determining is independent of any request by the user for the alternate content;

wherein subject matter of the alternate content is different from subject matter of the original content; and

wherein the determining is based at least in part on one of the following: ~~the channel providing the original content presently being viewed by the user; choice of a content type selected by the user in viewing the original content; and a genre of the original content~~ selected by the user.

46. (currently amended) The user device ~~system~~ of claim 45, wherein the data representing the indicator form indicates one of a plurality of possible indicator forms.

47. (currently amended) The user device ~~system~~ of claim 45, wherein the data representing the indicator form comprises a graphic.

48. (currently amended) The user device system of claim 47, wherein the graphic is displayed on the screen as the indication that the indicator signal has been received.

49. (currently amended) The user device system of claim 48, wherein the graphic is pre-selected by the user.

50. (currently amended) The user device system of claim 48, wherein the graphic is included in the indicator signal.

51-75. (canceled)

76. (currently amended) A computer program product placed on a machine-readable medium having stored thereon a series of instructions, the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

receive, at a user device, an indicator signal from an interactive television service provider's network, the indicator signal indicating availability and a location of alternate content and containing data representing an indicator form;

determine, at the user device, and independent of any request by a user of the user device for the alternate content, whether the indicator signal is relevant to atthe user viewing original content provided by the interactive television service provider's network; and

responsive to determining the indicator signal is relevant to the user, display on a screen of the user device an indication that the indicator signal has been received, the indication corresponding to the data representing the indicator form;

wherein subject matter of the alternate content is different from subject matter of the original content; and

wherein the determining is based at least in part on one of the following: ~~a channel providing the original content presently being viewed by the user; choice of a content type selected by the user in viewing the original content; and a genre of the original content~~ selected by the user.

77. (previously presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 76, wherein the data representing the indicator form indicates one of a plurality of possible indicator forms.

78. (previously presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 76, wherein the data representing the indicator form comprises a graphic.

79. (previously presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 78, wherein the graphic is displayed on the screen as the indication that the indicator signal has been received.

80. (original) The machine-readable medium of claim 79, wherein the graphic is pre-selected by the user.

81-93. (canceled)